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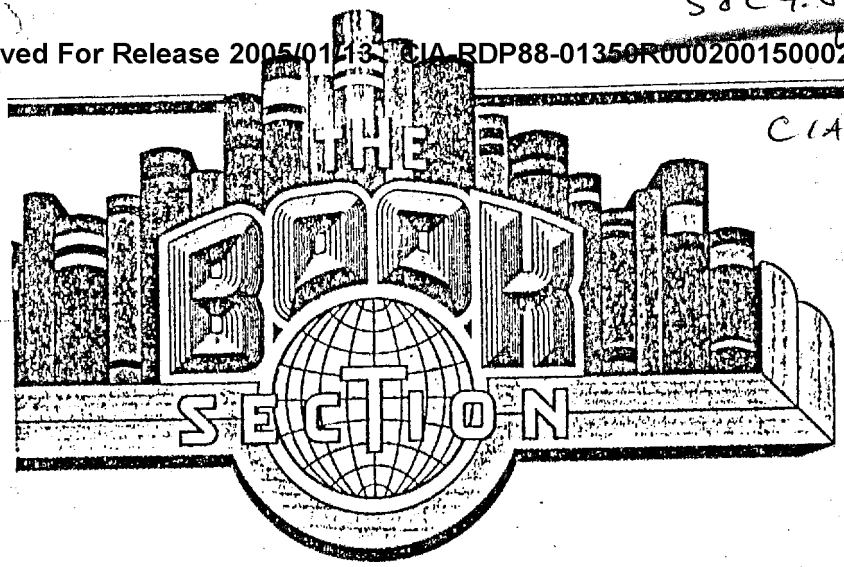

Intelligence Tests

By Doris Grumbach

The Night Watch, by David Atlee Phillips. New York: Atheneum. 309 pp. $9.95.

David Atlee Phillips, in an interview with *Newsweek International*, admitted that the CIA "is at the center of a great controversy. There's no question that we have a public relations problem of some magnitude."

How great a problem, and of what magnitude, has been made quite clear to readers of books in the past ten years. The veritable flood of CIA books began with Lyman B. Kirkpatrick's *The Real CIA* (Macmillan, 1968), a thorough defense of the organization, a well-written and seemingly accurate "house" book. L. Fletcher Prouty, a retired air force officer who claims he was close to the late Director of Central Intelligence Allen Dulles and purports to have been inside the whole process of intelligence, wrote a quirky and (some people thought at the time) misguided book, *The Secret Team* (Prentice-Hall, 1973). Prouty, it turned out, was drawing heavily upon his somewhat minor CIA liaison experience and upon what is still a major contribution to the literature on the subject, *The Invisible Government* by David Wise and Thomas B. Ross (Random House, 1964). The Wise-Ross book promoted itself as "the first full, authentic account of America's intelligence and espionage apparatus."

The Invisible Government posed the central problem of secret service, not merely a question of public relations, as Phillips would have it, but a constitutional, even ethical matter: "The invisible government," wrote Wise and Ross, "emerged in the aftermath of World War II as one of the instruments designed to ensure national survival. But because it was hidden, because it operated outside of the normal constitutional checks and balances, it posed a potential threat to the very system it was designed to protect." They recommended better control of the intelligence establishment, careful weighing of the results if US "special operations" in a foreign country should be successful, a joint committee of the House and Senate to oversee intelligence, and, yes, greater presidential power in this area. They concluded that "the secret intelligence machinery of the government can never be totally reconciled with the traditions of a free republic." The solution was not to abandon intelligence, especially during the Cold War, but to bring it under greater control.

Since that time, Wise and Ross seem to have made a business of writing about intelligence. Their joint effort, *The Espionage Establishment* (Random House, 1967), was a startling survey of what was going on in the Soviet Union, Great Britain, Communist China and the United States.

Wise and Ross were writing in the Sixties, and had the failure of the Bay of Pigs caper, the U-2 affair and such to justify a critical analysis. What has brought down upon us a new spate of books in this decade? There are seven at latest count, beginning with Victor Marchetti and John D. Marks, whose book, *The CIA and the Cult of Intelligence* (Knopf, 1974), so upset the US government that it brought suit before publication to censor the book. When the legal storm cleared, the book appeared in print, with the 168 CIA Passages originally ordered taken out by the CIA, but which were restored to the book, were printed in boldface. It makes especially interesting reading because all the key "revelations" are easy to find: They stand out black against gray print, and they stand as evidence that the CIA has become "obsessed," in Marchetti's word, with clandestine operations.

One explanation for the new wave of CIA books is public indignation at press revelations of espionage, break-ins, wiretapping, mail opening, bugging and spying by the CIA within the United States. Such acts were clearly irregular and illegal. Accordingly, we have a new David Wise book, *The American Police State* (Random House, 1977), reviewing in almost novel-like form Richard Nixon's and Henry Kissinger's wiretapping of their own aides, Lyndon Johnson's bugging of the 1964 National Convention, buggings by others in Watergate and Chile, and eavesdropping upon Martin Luther King, Jr., Joseph Kraft and Morton Halperin. The book, whose title some claim is rather excessive, details the activities not only of the CIA but also of the FBI, the IRS and other agencies that Wise claims have illegally spied on American citizens here and abroad.

If most of the literature has been critical of intelligence activities, the CIA has not been without its defenders, such as Ray S. Cline (*Secrets, Spies and Scholars*, Acropolis) and Harry Rositzke (*The CIA's Secret Operations*, Reader's Digest Press). Insiders, both men put in long service with the agency; both defend the CIA's acts. Rositzke excuses covert activities on the grounds that they represent only a small part of what the CIA does; they are carried on with a

president's knowledge and assent. In the end, Rositzke looks away from his own house and suggests that the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) and the National Security Agency (NSA) ought to be restrained and cleaned up, leaving the CIA alone for a while. Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr. lends his prestige to this highly personal and somewhat superficial account by concluding in his preface that "The future of the intelligence community remains a vital issue for Congress and the people. The problem is to insure restraint and accountability without abandoning necessary secrecy." Rositzke tells us his book was written solely "to balance the one-sided record of the CIA's secret operations that came out in congressional and newspaper publicity."

Cline's account is a history, from 1941, when the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) was formed, through the establishment of its successor, the CIA, in 1947, and thence to the present. His story is personal. He believes the cloud over the CIA will pass, that its detractors are conscious or unwitting patsies of Soviet Communism. But he does suggest a number of reforms for the agency: he'd make its work more public, have congressional committees to review it, and so forth.

One of the agents who has told a small part of the CIA story is in trouble. Philip Agee, an ex-CIA spy who purported to expose Latin American operations in his book, *Inside the Company: CIA Diary* (Stonehill, 1975), was told by the British government last November that he would be deported "in the interests of national security" under the 1971 Immigration Act. He was ordered out of the country in February. Agee is writing a second book now. He had served for nine years as a CIA agent and named, in the book he published, a number of covert agents. Agee is accused by the British of maintaining "regular contacts harmful to the security of the United Kingdom."

The book discussed here by Robert J. Myers and Morton H. Halperin is *The Night Watch*, the latest addition to the growing library of CIA works. Fifty-four-year-old David Atlee Phillips left the CIA in 1974 to organize former US intelligence officers into the Association of Retired Intelligence Officers, "whose members will spread the CIA gospel to anyone who wants to listen." The two *Skeptic* reviewers of the Phillips book represent in their views both sides of the critical fraternity. Myers was a CIA officer in the Far East for a number of years, and is now writing a political espionage thriller. He has published a comic-poetic takeoff on Nixon, *The Tragedy of Richard the Second* (Acropolis), two takeoffs on the Frankenstein legend and a book of nonfiction, *The Coming Collapse of the Post Office* (Prentice-Hall). His latest novel, *The Virgin and the Vampire*, will appear in June of this year. Morton H. Halperin heads the Project on National Security and Civil Liberties, which is sponsored by the ACLU Foundation and the Center for National Security Studies of the Fund for Peace. He and his family recently won their civil suit arising from the wiretap of their home telephone in 1969 and 1970. Richard Nixon, H.R. Haldeman and John Mitchell have been ordered by a federal district court judge to pay Halperin damages. He served on Henry Kissinger's staff of the National Security Council in 1969, and is co-author of the recently published *The Lawless State* (Penguin). Morton Halperin was awarded the Meritorious Civilian Service Award by the Department of Defense in 1969; Robert J. Myers holds the Intelligence Medal.

Good Work

By Robert J. Myers

The Night Watch is not only a vigorous defense of the need for a CIA heavily involved in clandestine operations and covert actions but also a personal chronicle of 25 years of American foreign policy in Latin America and the Caribbean. The story is told through the eyes of an extraordinary CIA intelligence officer, David Phillips, who resigned in 1975 to lead the public fight against detractors of an organization he felt had served the nation well. His career is witness to this belief. If his arguments fail to convince skeptics, that is too bad. For there is not likely to be a better book on why America needs a strong intelligence capability.

One of the intriguing things about Phillips' narrative and about his own personality as mirrored in these well-written pages is that he cuts across the grain of intelligence mythology. The tradition of the intelligence service is that the successful operative has a passion for anonymity, that he is a little gray man moving quietly and unnoticed through the crowd. Phillips was the reverse of this stereotype. He had the knack and the luck — there is no other reasonable way to describe it — to ride almost continuously on the crest of the wave of historic excitement in Latin America. The wave broke, but each time he was soon back on the surfboard — Guatemala, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Chile — gliding back in again, to the plaudits of his superiors and the personal appreciation of at least two presidents. His book shows that he typified the strength and weakness of the CIA. His battle against the CIA's critics is at once a defense of himself and the agency that had molded him.

The story begins in Santiago, Chile, in 1950, when Phillips was running his own English-language newspaper. He was approached by the local CIA station to do various operational chores. His apprenticeship was promising. By 1954 he was deeply involved in the successful covert action operation that ousted Arbenz, the left-leaning president of Guatemala. Tenure as president of a Central American country in those days was not all that secure. How long a man remained in office was not entirely up to the voters of the country. President Eisenhower, for example, was convinced that the Soviets were going to send arms to the Guatemalan army, a force of 6,000 which, when properly and ideologically motivated, would provide the base of operations for a growing Red Menace in Central America. One can imagine the anguish of Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, down on his calloused Presbyterian knees, imploring the deity to do something about this fearsome prospect.

The deity's response was to summon forth Foster's brother, Allen, chief of the CIA (who in the firmament of avenging angels was foremost), and David Atlee Phillips. Phillips was assigned to psychological warfare — after all, he had run a newspaper in Chile — and his success made headlines. Arbenz was overthrown without a shot having been fired. The CIA team responsible for this achievement was received in the White House. The exuberant president, the Joint Chiefs of Staff and Vice President Richard Nixon heard the briefing and joined in the encomiums.

That White House scene demon-

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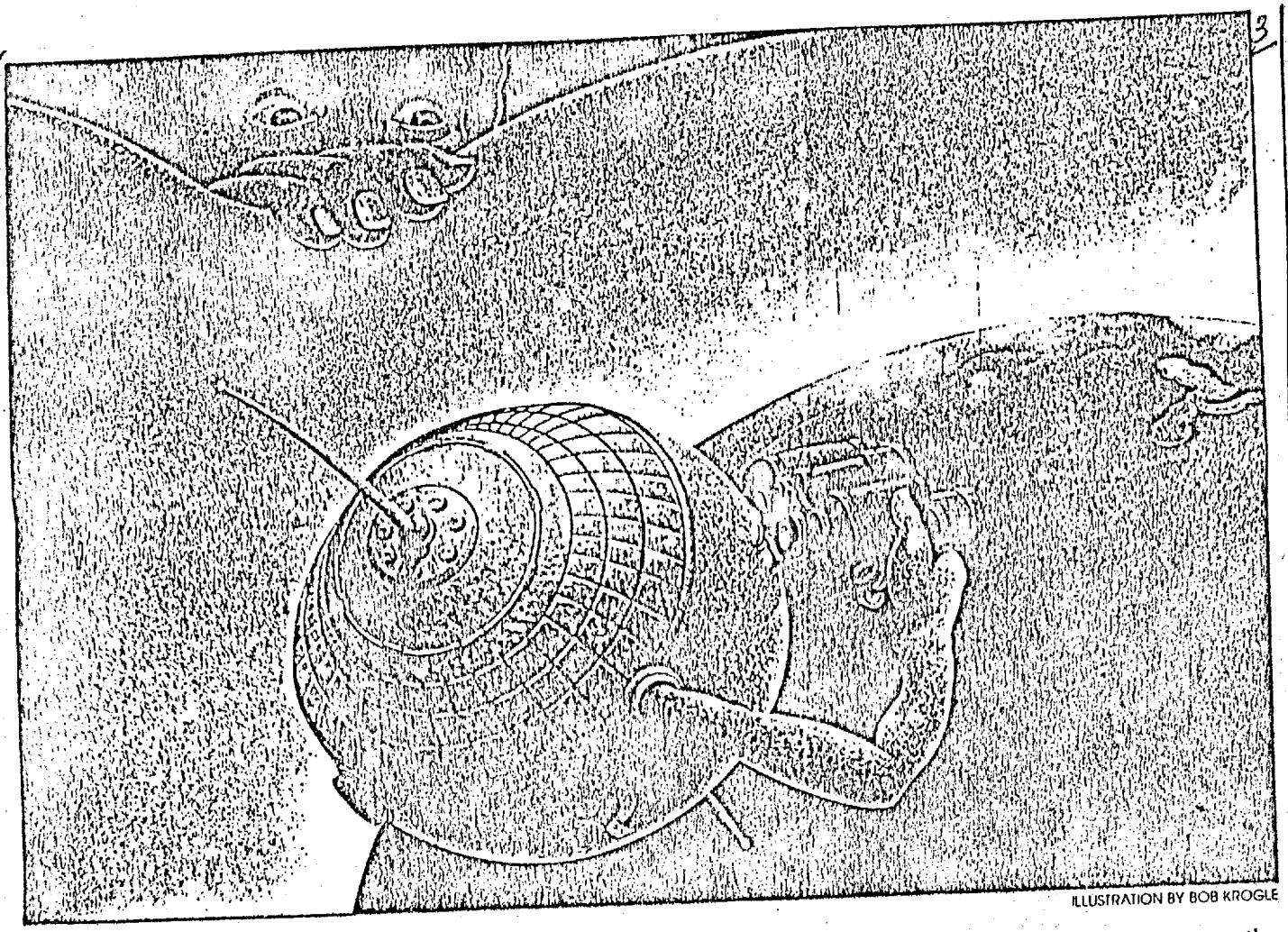

ILLUSTRATION BY BOB KROGLE

strated what has only lately been realized, namely, that the CIA is the personal instrument of the president. If a strong-willed president wants something done with that instrument, he has his way. And as Phillips points out, the American process of selecting presidents usually produces leaders of strong will. I would therefore suggest that the key to a responsible CIA is not institutional reform but a president who is dedicated to his oath to uphold the Constitution and therefore not to drag the CIA into questionable activities, such as domestic spying.

The CIA success in Guatemala in 1954 had one unfortunate legacy. It made it appear that the CIA knew magic, that it could wave its wand over any problem to make it disappear. But the CIA was left holding the bag when it came up against Fidel Castro in 1960. Nothing is left to be revealed about the Bay of Pigs but Phillips' perspective is still well worth reading; it explains why the people involved practically guaranteed the project would fail.

The entertainment value of *The Night Watch* is substantial. Phillips does nothing to diminish the humor in situations that arise in the clandestine business, situations that make Maxwell Smart seem adroit. The lasting value of the book, in addition to a true and compelling account of a unique career in intelligence, is Phillips' thoughtful analysis of the kind of intelligence service the US needs. He shows that, in pursuit of our national interests, we inevitably interfere in the affairs of other nations, through foreign aid, tariffs and the like. Intelligence work is another tool of government used to pursue its own, legitimate ends, and these ends do not have to be pushed beyond the limits of sound policy. Intelligence is valuable. Information gathered secretly on our perceived enemies, like the Soviet Union, has provided the basis for detente. Without the knowledge of the Soviet Union's armaments program, for example, there are no prospects for [illegible]

Phillips' book contains a number of examples of the value of the spy, the foreign agent who can tell us something of what the enemy intends to do, as opposed to the black boxes and satellite systems that keep us so well informed as to what the enemy can do, what his destructive capabilities are. Without knowing the intentions of our enemies, and without the covert ability to influence friends and foes, we would be a blindfolded nation. There really are people out there who don't wish us well. Phillips' book is a strong statement of the proven value of a good intelligence service, of why we still need intelligence, and of why, in the end, it is usually an honorable profession for a dedicated public servant.

Following Orders

By Morton H. Halperin

It is hard to believe that "Dave" Phillips, as he would want to be called, could have written in 1977 such a bland and nonpolitical book about intelligence. Phillips was a career CIA covert

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operator for more than 25 years who retired early, he tells us, to answer two other former CIA officials turned critic — Victor Marchetti and Philip Agee. Toward that end Phillips founded an association of former intelligence officers, speaks often on the lecture circuit, and now has written this book.

The Night Watch appears to be an attempt to neutralize Agee's reconstructed "diary" of his career as a CIA operator inside The Company. In the manner of Agee, Phillips takes the reader chronologically through his career, from recruited agent in Chile to station chief in Brazil and Venezuela, and head of the Latin American section of the clandestine services. Agee denounced the American role in Latin America; Phillips fails to provide a real defense.

Covert operations, he writes, are necessary because the world is a jungle in which all nations seek to use power to reach their goals. Covert operations are an instrument of power and must be used. But why and when and for what purpose? That, Phillips doesn't tell us. He notes that from time to time he has questioned the American right to intervene and the effect of the intervention. But he does not try to resolve those doubts for us or to provide a rationale for specific covert operations.

Phillips says he once promised his wife he would resign if he ever learned that the agency considered assassination a legitimate instrument of policy, but he did not. He writes that the only time he came close to principled resignation was when he was put in charge of Track II in Chile, the no-holds-barred effort to keep Salvador Allende from coming to power under the Chilean constitutional system. Phillips claims to have been troubled by the American effort to bring about a military coup in a country with a long history of civilian control, fair elections and democratic freedoms. He did not, of course, resign. One infers he didn't even try to get out of the assignment of directing the task force. Instead he worked long hours, in an effort he claims not to have believed in, to end democratic rule in Chile.

Phillips' description of the Track II exercise is typical of his book. There's no substantive information that is not already in the public domain, that was not revealed by the Pike and Church committees of the Congress. Phillips does not tell the reader if he cleared his book with the CIA, but he clearly did; he certainly did not include in it anything that his former associates would not want to be published.) He also does not discuss the politics of the Track II operation. The CIA undertook the mission because the president ordered it. That, Phillips seems to be saying, is enough justification for what the agency did.

Perhaps inadvertently, Phillips gives the reader the feeling that for most CIA operatives it is the sense of excitement and adventure which causes them to be willing to lead the double life of the CIA agent. It is just plain fun to recruit an agent by planting a fake horoscope in a local newspaper, to flirt with one's female case officer, to fabricate copy for a radio station that's pretending to be operating inside Guatemala. Phillips tells such stories with enthusiasm and obvious nostalgia for the days when it was possible to overthrow governments and still have a clear conscience. As he moves up the ladder Phillips is bored with the administrative duties and with the endless meetings in Washington. I suspect that one of the reasons he retired was the boredom.

If this book has any bite, it is in Phillips' obvious unhappiness with the "defectors" as he calls them, particularly with Agee. Phillips attempts to paint Agee as a Soviet KGB agent and to blame the murder of Richard Welch, the CIA station chief killed in Athens, on the agency's critics. Phillips says of Agee's connection with foreign spies: "From intelligence available to the CIA it was obvious to me that Agee was in contact with the Cuban intelligence service and, by implication at least, indirectly with the KGB." He continues: "I want to publicize this connection." As one who is often in contact with American intelligence officers (including Dave Phillips who, as he states in a footnote and in all our joint public appearances, lives across the street from me in a Washington suburb), I have a strong objection to guilt by association. I wonder, too, how Phillips would feel if he were accused of collaborating "at least indirectly" with Agee, Marchetti and Marks, since they are in contact with me and I with him. Since his retirement Phillips has called Agee a defector and implied that he was an agent of a hostile intelligence service on no greater evidence than that.

The murder of Richard Welch is the leitmotiv of the second half of this book. Welch appears from time to time as a genteel man who could quote Shakespeare in Latin translation and who wanted only to be station chief in Athens. Phillips helped him to get that post, and there he was murdered. Phillips writes that the critics were responsible because Welch's name was published in *Counterspy* magazine. For a 25-year CIA veteran and an expert on false propaganda operations, Phillips is either disingenuous or extraordinarily naive. He pretends not to know that the death of Welch was exploited by the CIA in order to discredit critics of the agency. In an effort much more sophisticated than this book, the agency led the Washington press corps to believe that Welch's cover was blown by the publication of his name. The agency knew very well that what exposed Welch to assassination was his decision to live in what he described to Phillips as the "notorious" house that had been occupied by Athens station chiefs for many years. Indeed, the CIA had warned Welch that if he lived in the house he ran the risk of being killed. That information was deliberately suppressed by the agency and the press was hoodwinked. But such things never happen in the fairy-tale world of Phillips' CIA, where good guys work long hours in behalf of democracy and revere our constitutional system. Dave Phillips would have us believe that that's the way it is, but his book is one disinformation effort that should be doomed to failure.